

DOE Weekly Field Memo – March 10, 2010

From the Vermont Department of Education:

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Memo from Deputy Commissioner: Race to the Top Application Update

Audience: All

Race to the Top is a competitive funding opportunity being issued in two rounds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Vermont is applying in Round 2, with the potential to receive up to \$75 million over four years to support school and state efforts to realize Vermont's education goals.

View the complete memo about Vermont's Race to the Top Application at:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/recovery_act.html#rttt_update.

Contact: Rae Ann Knopf, Deputy Commissioner, at (802) 828-3813 or rae.knopf@state.vt.us

Press Release: Federal Funds Available for Vermont's Lowest Achieving Schools

Audience: All

A new federal regulation from the U.S. Department of Education required states to identify "persistently low-achieving schools" in order to receive federal funding as part of the Statewide Fiscal Stabilization Fund allocations under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Read the complete release at http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/press_releases.html.

Contact: Rae Ann Knopf, Deputy Commissioner, at (802) 828-3813 or rae.knopf@state.vt.us

National Common Core Standards Initiative and Public Comment Opportunity

Audience: All

This document provides background on Vermont's commitment to the National Common Core Standards Initiative. The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has released the first official public draft of the K-12 standards as part of the initiative, a process being led by governors and chief state school officers in 51 states and territories, including Vermont. These draft standards seek to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare children for college and the workforce. The NGA Center and CCSSO encourage those interested in the standards to provide further feedback **by Friday, April 2, 2010**, at <http://www.corestandards.org>.

To view the complete document, visit:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_assessment.html#nccs_feedback.

Contact: Gail Taylor, Director of Standards and Assessment, at (802) 828-5158 or gail.taylor@state.vt.us

Invitation to Briefing on Board Examination Systems

Audience: Superintendents, High School Principals, School Board Members

Commissioner Vilaseca invites you to a briefing on the Board Examination Systems program of the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) with President Marc Tucker on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in the Pavilion Auditorium at 109 State Street in Montpelier.

Vermont has an opportunity to participate with seven other states in piloting some of the best instructional systems and examinations with the intent of dramatically increasing the number of students who leave high school ready to succeed in college. The focus for our state is on allowing high schools that choose to participate to adopt some of the best (and proven) instructional practices, to provide a powerful system of support to our struggling students, our most able students, and everyone in between, and to motivate our high school students to take tough courses and study hard in school. Participation by schools in this effort is entirely voluntary, and only students who choose to will participate.

To view the complete memo and to register go to

<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/maindept.html#ncee>.

Contact: Cindy Lee, Commissioner's Assistant, at (802) 828-0770 or cindy.lee@state.vt.us

Discrete Mathematics for High School Teachers

Audience: Superintendents, Principals, Curriculum Coordinators, Teachers

Discrete math topics are becoming more common in high school curricula and there is an escalating need for teachers to get exposure to ideas, methods and applications in this area in order to be better prepared to facilitate student discovery. This course will draw from topics in the following areas of study: basic counting methods, the binomial theorem, recursion and generating functions, graph theory, logic and truth tables, Latin squares, set theory, inclusion exclusion, and fair division and voting. Discrete Mathematics for High School Teachers will be structured in a problem solving format which will promote assisted discovery, communication of process & examination of alternate solution routes. July 12-16 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at UVM. Visit <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html#discrete> for more information and to register.

Contact: Kathy Lamphier at (802) 656-8186 or ymi@cems.uvm.edu or

DOE Contact: Pat Fitzsimmons, Assistant Division Director, at (802) 828-0196 or pat.fitzsimmons@state.vt.us

Nimble Tools Assessment Accessibility

Audience: Principals, Curriculum-Coordinators, Superintendents and Special Education Coordinators

This week Vermont principals will be receiving a mailing from a group called Nimble Tools offering schools access to a computer accessibility tool for the Spring 2010 Science Assessment. Principals should be assured of two things: Nimble Tools is fully authorized by the Vermont Department of Education to offer this assessment option and at no cost to the schools. Nimble Tools is a national leader in the area of computer-based assessment options for students with special assessment needs and has been working with the NECAP states for several years using resources from a federal assessment grant. The accessibility platform was available last spring for the grade 11 science assessment only, and received very high marks from the students and teachers that used it.. This year it will also be available at grades 4 and 8. Currently, schools are being asked to access a roster of their students on the Nimble Tools website, and to select students who would benefit from having the accessibility tool available to them. Schools can also review a demo of the tool at the Nimble Tools Web site.

Contact: Michael Hock, Assessment Director, at (802) 828-3115 or michael.hock@state.vt.us

Reminder: Vermont Kindergarten Conference Registration

Audience: Kindergarten Teachers, Early Educators

There are only a few weeks left to register for the 18th Annual Vermont Kindergarten Conference on April 9, 2010 at the Hilton Hotel in Burlington, Vermont. Registrations are on a first come, first serve basis and workshops are filling up, so please register now. Please note: The registration deadline has been extended to **March 26, 2010**. Visit http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html#kid_con for more information.

Contact: Shirley Rawson, Assistant, at (802) 828-5128 or shirley.rawson@state.vt.us for registration questions; Manuela Fonseca, Early Education Specialist, at (802) 828-3850 or manuela.fonseca@state.vt.us for content questions.

From the Vermont Human Rights Commission:

Who, What, Where, When, and How? Investigating Complaints of Harassment in Schools

Audience: School Administrators, Designated Employees, School Staff Who May be Involved in the Investigation of Complaints of Harassment

Tuesdays, April 27th & May 11th, 2010; 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.; Stone Grill Restaurant, Morrisville
The first workshop (April 27th) will provide participants with a very brief overview and update of the law, a brief review of the 2007 model harassment policy, and skills development: conducting complaint intakes and interview tips and techniques. The second workshop (May 11th) will continue the interview skills development, this time focusing on investigation interviews. In addition, the second workshop will focus on developing investigation plans, maintaining investigation records, analyzing information (evidence), and writing investigative reports. While not required, we strongly recommend that participants attend both workshops. The cost is \$30.00 per person per workshop (\$60.00 for both days) and includes lunch and a binder of materials. **Deadline for registration is Monday, April 19, 2010.** To register for the workshop, please send your name, title, and school name via e-mail to Tracey Tsugawa at

tracey.tsugawa@state.vt.us. Checks should be made out and sent to the Vermont Human Rights Commission, 14-16 Baldwin Street, Montpelier, VT 05633-6301, ATTN: Tracey Tsugawa. We cannot send out purchase orders or invoices to schools.
Contact: Tracey Tsugawa at (800) 416-2010 or tracey.tsugawa@state.vt.us

Weekly Field Memo is Online!

The DOE Weekly Field Memo is archived on the Department of Education Web site at http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/field_memo.html. Field Memos and the corresponding attachments are available for download. For Field Memo information three months or older, or for other questions, please contact Jill Remick, communications director, at (802) 828-3154 or jill.remick@state.vt.us.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For the Department of Education Web site see: <http://education.vermont.gov/>. For upcoming events or professional development opportunities, see the DOE Calendar of Events located at: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html>.

Main Department Line: (802) 828-3135

NOTE: For comments or questions specific to the messages above, please contact the person listed. DO NOT reply to this message.

This Field Memo is posted weekly by the Department of Education to better organize our e-communications to the field. There may be times when separate messages from the department will still be sent.